

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-02 PA-02 PRS-01

USIA-15 /052 W

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R 151600Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9421

INFO FAA WASHDC

FAA BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS PARIS 12327

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR

SUBJ: CIVAIR: REQUEST FOR FAA PRESS CONFERENCE ON
CONCORDE AT PARIS AIR SHOW

1. AT EMBASSY BRIEFING FOR FRENCH PRESS PRIOR PARIS AIR SHOW, GEORGES MERCIER, PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL AERONAUTICAL AND SPACE JOURNALISTS, ASKED FAA REP WHETHER FAA/W OFFICIALS COMING TO AIR SHOW WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET WITH ABOUT FIFTEEN JOURNALISTS, PERHAPS AT US PAVILION, TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH INTRODUCTION OF CONCORDE SERVICE TO US. FAA REP SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO REFER REQUEST TO APPROPRIATE FAA AUTHORITIES.

2. MERCIER HAS FOLLOWED UP WITH LETTER TO FAA REP OF WHICH INFORMAL TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:
"CONFIRMING OUR CONVERSATION OF 6 MAY, IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE IF JOURNALISTS SPECIALIZING IN AVIATION MATTERS COULD MEET WITH TOP FAA OFFICIALS DURING THE PARIS AIR SHOW. WE WOULD APPRECIATE HEARING TOP OFFICIALS OF SO HIGHLY QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION AS YOURS EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON THE
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PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE INAUGURATION OF CONCORDE

SERVICE BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE U.S. WE WOULD THUS BE BETTER ABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THIS SCORE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC.

"IN ANY CASE, EVEN IF FAA MAY HAVE SOME RELUCTANCE TO TALK ABOUT CONCORDE, THERE ARE MANY OTHER SUBJECTS THAT COULD BE DISCUSSED, TAKING GOOD ADVANTAGE OF THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR DIRECT CONTACTS OFFERED BY THE AIR SHOW. WE CAN FIRM UP THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE MEETING AS SOON AS YOU HAVE RECEIVED AN ACCEPTANCE IN PRINCIPLE."

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY SEES NO OBJECTION ACCEDING TO ABOVE REQUEST AND INDEED SOME ADVANTAGE. THERE IS CONFUSION IN FRANCE, EVEN IN SUCH WELL-INFORMED CIRCLES AS AVIATION TRADE PRESS, OVER STATE OF PLAY IN THE US WITH REGARD TO USG PROCEDURAL STEPS AND FEDERAL VERSUS LOCAL PREROGATIVES BEARING ON QUESTION OF EVENTUAL CONCORDE SERVICE TO US. THERE ALSO PERSISTS IN MANY QUARTERS IN FRANCE, E.G., SUGGESTION IN MERCIER LETTER THAT FAA MIGHT HAVE "SOME RELUCTANCE" TO TALK ABOUT CONCORDE, THAT IN US CONCORDE REMAINS, EVEN WITHIN USG, ALMOST A DIRTY WORD. IT SEEMS TO US THAT MEETING WITH TRADE PRESS AS PROPOSED BY MERCIER WOULD PROVIDE EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO EVIDENCE (A) THAT ON THE CONTRARY WE HAVE NO RELUCTANCE TO TALK ABOUT CONCORDE (THOUGH OBVIOUSLY WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO OUTCOME OF EIS HEARINGS AND REVIEW) AND (B) THAT USG ATTITUDE TOWARDS CONCORDE HAS BEEN AND REMAINS FAIR AND OBJECTIVE. PRESS CONFERENCE MIGHT ALSO BE TIMED COINCIDE WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY BARNUM'S STAY, BUT ON THIS WE DEFER TO WISHES OF FAA/W AND DEPUTY SECRETARY BARNUM.
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